

IV. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. - 9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A method for connecting a plug to the a socket according to any one of claims 1 to 4, the socket comprising:

an insulating socket housing having an opening part through which a plug having dual in-line male contacts is inserted;

female contacts which are arrayed in parallel on a pair of opposing inner walls of the opening part and come into contact with the male contacts when the plug is inserted into the opening part;

an insulating shutter which closes a front face of the opening part when the plug is removed and retracts towards a rear face of the opening part by being pushed by the plug when the plug is inserted for protecting the female contacts from dust; and

a shell covering the socket housing; wherein

the shutter is formed of a substantially flat board-like element disposed approximately perpendicular to the direction of the plug insertion; and wherein

the shell comprises a pair of members formed on a pair of opposing edges for partially covering the front face of the opening part and for preventing the shutter from coming out from the socket housing, and

the plug comprising:

an insulating plug housing having a frame part and a header part which is formed integrally with the frame part and is protruded from the frame part to be inserted into the socket;

male contacts arrayed in parallel and on a pair of outer walls on the header part; and

a plug shutter which covers the male contacts arrayed on the header part and can be stored in the frame part, the method comprising:

moving the plug shutter towards the rear face of the opening part along inner walls of the opening part when the plug is inserted into the opening part of the socket; and

moving the plug shutter towards the front face of the opening part along the inner walls of the opening part when the plug is removed from the socket.

11. (Canceled)

12. (New) A connector comprising:

a socket comprising an insulating socket housing having an opening part, female contacts which are arrayed in parallel on a pair of opposing inner walls of the opening part, an insulating shutter for closing a front face of the opening part, and a shell covering the socket housing; and

a plug comprising an insulating plug housing having a frame part and a header part which is formed integrally with the frame part and protrudes from the frame part to be inserted into the opening part of the socket, male contacts arrayed in parallel on a pair of outer walls of the header part, and a plug shutter for covering the male contacts;

wherein each of the male contacts comes in contact with each of the female contacts by inserting the header part of the plug into the opening part of the socket from the front face towards a rear face opposing to the front face,

wherein the shutter is formed of a substantially flat board and is disposed perpendicularly to the direction of the insertion,

wherein the socket further comprises a pair of elastic members for moving the shutter towards the front face of the opening part when the plug is removed,

wherein the shell has a pair of members formed on a pair of opposing edges for preventing the shutter from coming out from the socket housing, and

wherein the shutter is moved towards the rear face of the opening part by being pushed by the tip of the header part to open the opening part, and a pair of opposing edges of the opening part push the plug shutter so that the plug shutter is slid so as to be stored in the frame part to expose the male contacts when the plug is inserted into the socket.

13. (New) The connector according to claim 12, wherein legs of the female contacts are extended from the socket housing so as to be fixable to a printed circuit board.

14. (New) The connector according to claim 12, wherein a pair of soldering tabs for fixing the socket housing to a printed circuit board, the tabs being disposed on side parts of the shell.

15. (New) The connector according to claim 12, wherein the female contacts are arrayed in parallel at regular intervals of 0.5 mm.